

respectfully traversed, as the Bach patent fails to teach or suggest the combination of features set forth in Applicants' claim 20.

Exemplary embodiments of the present invention are directed to a carrier system for providing positive control over a printable medium processed by a printing system, to prevent damage to the printable medium. The exemplary Figure 1 embodiment illustrates a carrier system 100 associated with a printable medium 104. A carrier system 100 includes a first roller chain carrier assembly 120 for contacting the printable medium from one side, and a second roller chain carrier assembly 122 for contacting the printable medium from an opposite side. The first and second roller chain carrier assemblies work in synchronism to positively control a transport of the medium 104 from an area of constraint upstream of a cutting cylinder pair 102, through the cutting cylinder pair. The first and second roller chain carrier assemblies maintain positive control over signatures as they are transported to a downstream area of constraint.

The first roller chain carrier assembly includes a first looped drive chain 124 and a second looped drive chain 130. The second roller chain carrier assembly 122 also includes a first looped drive chain 138 and a second looped drive chain 142. The first and second roller chain carrier assemblies 120 and 122 contact the medium via cross bars associated with each of the first and second roller chain carrier assemblies. For example, the first roller chain carrier assembly includes gripper cross bars 152 through 164, while the second roller chain carrier assembly 122 includes roller cross bars 166 through 174. Each gripper cross bar includes a plurality of grippers 176 mounted on a support bar 178. Roller cross bars, such as roller cross bar 166, each include a roller 180 supported on a support bar

182. The gripper cross bars of the first roller chain carrier assembly 120 rotate in synchronism with the roller cross bars of the second roller chain carrier assembly, such that a gripper cross bar (e.g., gripper cross bar 152) contacts the printable medium from one side, while a corresponding roller cross bar (e.g., roller cross bar 156) contacts the medium from the other side.

The foregoing features are broadly encompassed by Applicants' claim 20 combination which is directed to a carrier system for establishing positive control over a printable medium processed by a printing system. The claim 20 carrier system includes a first roller chain carrier assembly and a second roller chain carrier assembly. At least one rotatably mounted gripper cross bar is in operative connection with the first roller chain assembly, and a rotatably mounted roller cross bar is in operative connection with the second roller chain carrier assembly. At least one rotatably mounted gripper cross bar and at least one rotatably mounted roller cross bar cooperate along a transport path of the printable medium.

Such features are neither taught nor suggested by the Bach patent, which is directed to the manufacture of tabulating cards. Figure 1 of the Bach patent illustrates clips 11 carried by and spaced equal distances along an endless driven belt 12. Each clip 11 is spring-biased to a closed position in which the leading edge of each card is pinched between a wedge-shaped tip 11a and the belt 12. Another belt 20 is parallel to the vertical run of the belt 12 such that tips 11a and cards 10 projecting therefrom are positioned adjacent a plurality of tool units 23 carried by belt 20. As described at column 4, lines 46 et seq., work operations, such as cutting beveled corners on trailing edges of a card 10,

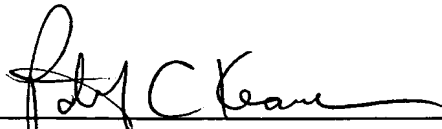
suggestion that any rotatable crossbar is associated with each clip 11. As such, there is no teaching or suggestion of a rotatably mounted cross bar as recited in claim 20.

In light of the foregoing comments, it is respectfully requested that claim 20 is allowable over the Bach patent whether this document is considered alone, or in combination with the unsubstantiated assertion of "official notice" taken by the Examiner in the Office Action. Claim 20 is therefore considered allowable. The remaining claims 21-23 and 27 depend from claim 20 and recite additional advantageous features which further distinguish. Similarly, non-elected claims 24-26 depend from claim 20 and recite additional advantageous features which are also considered allowable. As such, an indication of allowance of all of claims 20-27 is respectfully requested.

All objections and rejections raised in the Office Action having been addressed, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in condition for allowance and such allowance is respectfully solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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